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PROTRACTED RELIEF AND RECOVERY OPERATION— AFGHANISTAN 6064.01

Protracted Relief and Recovery Assistance for Afghanistan

Number of beneficiaries 2,574,300
Duration of project Two years
(1 January 2000–31 December 2001)

Cost (United States dollars)

Total cost to WFP	88,125,694
Total food cost	27,156,488
Total project cost	88,125,694

In June 1999 one United States dollar equalled 28,700 Afghanis (official rate of exchange).
The prevailing market rate of exchange was close to 44,000 Afghanis.

ABSTRACT

Afghanistan is beset by an unrelenting cycle of intense seasonal military activities and regularly occurring natural disasters. There is significant internal population movement, and the potential reintegration of over 2 million refugees currently living in Iran and Pakistan. A centralized recovery policy or programme has not been established. Military activities are given priority over human and material resources. The current environment ensures that the appalling conditions of life continue unabated for many Afghans.

Internal displacement has swollen the urban centres, adding to the supply of casual labour while few additional employment opportunities are created. Low purchasing power impedes access to food which is available in the urban marketplace. Military blockades and natural emergencies such as floods or mudslides inhibit the amount of food imported into low-production rural areas. These are factors which chronically affect Afghanistan and which will be exacerbated in 2000 with the 16 percent reduction in the 1999 cereal harvest, due to the previous dry winter. Frequent border closures due to military activity in the country, internal security threats, and a poor infrastructure network hamper the delivery of food aid.

The PRRO for 2000–2001 is intended to provide immediate-impact food aid to the most vulnerable families in food-insecure areas and assist in stabilizing the food security situation. Relief assistance will target the most vulnerable households estimated to be at risk of food insecurity by the WFP Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping team for Afghanistan. These households are represented by families whose household incomes are insufficient to ensure minimum food requirements. Over 1.4 million individuals, at least 54 percent of them women and girls, will be targeted by WFP relief assistance in 2000. The progressive expansion of the rehabilitation component of the PRRO in 2000–2001 will permit relief assistance to be reduced in 2001, targeting just over 800,000 individuals, at least 55 percent of them women. Rehabilitation assistance will serve to improve overall agricultural infrastructure in order to stimulate food production. WFP intends to resume the rehabilitation of rural feeder roads to improve access to markets and health facilities.

WFP continues its commitment to employ both international and national professional women in order to assist Afghan women benefiting from WFP activities and as a demonstration effect. Although in prior years WFP female staff encountered limitations to performing their work, at present WFP female international and national staff are working in most of the major urban centres. It is anticipated that the Ministry of Public Health will issue official working permits to WFP national female staff.

In Afghanistan, WFP works within the rest of the United Nations system in addressing the transition to recovery in Afghanistan under the Principled Common Programming approach, coordinated by Regional Coordinating Bodies comprising local communities, the authorities, United Nations agencies and NGOs. Within the United Nations family WFP collaborates extensively with FAO, HABITAT, UNHCR, UNICEF and WHO. International and national NGOs are also key partners in the implementation of projects. To the extent possible, local government and government departments collaborate in the implementation of relief projects such as institutional feeding and in some regions in limited rehabilitation activities.

NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted for approval by the Executive Board.

The Secretariat invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document, to contact the WFP staff focal points indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

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Should you have any questions regarding matters of dispatch of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact the Documentation and Meetings Clerk (tel.: 066513-2641).



ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

ACBAR	Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief
ACTED	<i>Agence d'aide à la coopération technique et au développement</i>
CARE	Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere
CSB	Corn-soya blend
FSO	Field Security Officer
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
MCI	Mercy Corps International
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RCO	Regional coordination officers
UNSECOORD	United Nations Security Coordinator
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping



CONTEXT AND RATIONALE FOR PROVIDING ASSISTANCE

Context of the Crisis

1. The seriously debilitating conditions for human life continue unchecked in Afghanistan. One quarter of all children die before they reach their fifth birthday. Life expectancy is 44 years for women and 43 for men. Thirty-five percent of the population have access to health care. Twelve percent have access to safe drinking water. Adult literacy figures remain abysmally low at 10 percent and 35 percent for urban females and males, respectively; these figures decrease to 3 percent for rural females and 26 percent for males. Internal and external communication has been rendered inoperative by more than 20 years of war. Much infrastructure is ruined or in disrepair.¹
2. The Afghan refugees, estimated by UNHCR to be 1.4 million in Iran and 1.2 million in Pakistan, are gradually returning. Their reintegration into Afghanistan will be severely hampered by the tenuous economic situation.
3. Significant internal population movement to the major urban centres continues. For example, the population in Jalalabad has swelled from 160,000 in 1979 to 700,000 in 1999, while in Faizabad the current population is estimated to be 65,000, compared to the 1979 figure of 9,000. The economies in these urban centres have not expanded commensurately.
4. Fighting between the Taliban and the Northern Alliance continues. Military activities abated during the winter months of 1998/99, but have been re-activated with intense fighting in and around several locations including Bamyan, Kunduz, and the frontline 25 km north of Kabul city.

Situation Analysis

5. Locally produced food and commodities imported from Iran and Pakistan are available in the urban markets. However, for many people access is restricted because of their lack of purchasing power, as unemployment and under-employment are endemic. This problem appears to be increasing as many displaced people swell the supply of casual labour while few additional employment opportunities are being created. Low purchasing power is the single most important impediment to food security.
6. Between May 1996 and May 1999 the price of the main staple, wheat flour, increased from 2,800 Afghanis to 11,900 Afghanis per kg in Kabul, a rise of 320 percent. A comparison of wheat flour prices with casual labour rates is difficult before mid-1998, when information on labour rates began to be collected. Between May 1998 and May 1999 there was a small increase, from 4.0 to 4.2 kg in the amount of wheat flour purchasable with a day's wages in Kabul. However, this figure is extremely low by international standards and anecdotal evidence suggests that it has declined significantly over the past few years. A broadly similar pattern exists for the other five urban centres in Afghanistan for which WFP compiles data on key indicators.

¹ There is a dearth of current and reliable figures on the socio-economic situation in Afghanistan. Figures used here are taken from United Nations agencies and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) fact sheet on Afghanistan. Access to a broader range of data will be facilitated in future by the establishment of a database by the United Nation's Programme Management Information System.



7. The Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) team for Afghanistan has been able to lay the groundwork by identifying the criteria that permit WFP and its partners to estimate the number of households at risk. In urban areas, the VAM study found that typically the most important single determinant of a household's ability to meet the minimum income level is the presence of male labour. If the major sources of household income are children's work or women's work at home, then these households are more likely to have a per capita income below the amount necessary for minimum food expenditures.¹ Males employed in government service, as daily wage labourers, or in petty trade also experience difficulty in meeting their families' minimum food needs. In rural areas, the landless, particularly in the highlands, are among those who have the greatest difficulty in attaining minimum food needs.
8. Afghanistan enjoyed near self-sufficiency in food production in the mid-1970s. The situation has changed drastically as unabated civil unrest for the past 20 years has damaged irrigation structures and forced the out-migration of farmers. An estimated 10 million land-mines have resulted in less land being cultivated. Traditional areas of surplus food production are located in the northern as well as the southern and eastern parts of the country. The northern regions depend on rain-fed crops while a mix of modern and more traditional irrigation systems is in use in the southern and eastern areas. While some improvements have been made in the agricultural sector, and production has gradually been increasing since 1990, annual crop production levels are subject to seasonal variation. For example, following the very favourable 1998 season when cereal production is thought to have reached its highest level in 20 years, the combination of a mild, dry winter and erratic spring rains has resulted in 1999 cereal production estimated to be 3.24 million tons. This is a 16 percent decrease from the 1998 figure. The corresponding cereal deficit in 1999/2000 is estimated to be the highest on record, at 1.1 million tons, up from 740,000 tons in 1998/99. While 800,000 tons of the 1999/2000 deficit are likely to be met by commercial imports, there is a potential shortfall of about 300,000 tons.
9. Natural disasters occur with alarming regularity in Afghanistan. There have been two major earthquakes in the past two years, drought in some parts of the country and flooding in others. FAO estimates that the 1998/99 winter season has been one of the driest on record in the past 20 years which will seriously affect crop production. These natural emergencies seriously aggravate the already fragile food security situation.
10. During the course of 1999, WFP Afghanistan plans to distribute about 100,000 tons of wheat and other food commodities to 1.2 million vulnerable beneficiaries. The cost to donors of this assistance is US\$53 million. Since 1993, the total value of WFP food aid to Afghanistan has exceeded US\$300 million, excluding 1999 aid.

Government Recovery Policies and Programmes

11. The Taliban, who currently control about 80 percent of the country, to date have not established a centralized recovery policy or programme for Afghanistan. Military activities are given priority for human and material resources while the erosion of local institutions

¹ A key concept of the VAM methodology in urban areas of Afghanistan is the minimum income per person per month required to meet the cost of minimum food needs. This definition of minimum income assumes that all of an individual's caloric requirements are met from wheat flour, which is the most common staple in Afghanistan. In the case of Kabul in late 1998, this income level was equivalent to US\$3.5 per person per month. However, individuals have additional survival needs, especially in the harsh Kabul winter. It was estimated that the minimum income level to meet minimum food and essential non-food requirements was US\$6 per person per month.



of governance makes recovery activities difficult to implement. Basic government social services such as schools and hospitals require major external support.

12. The authorities' participation in international assistance activities appears to vary between provinces and depends largely on the approach of the local authorities in place. In any case, government departments are in general neither properly staffed nor equipped to implement international assistance programmes.

Rationale

13. In the absence of a properly functioning and well organized government structure, the United Nations system is addressing the transition to recovery in Afghanistan under the Common Programming Approach. United Nations agencies in Afghanistan have devoted a great deal of energy since 1997 to the preparation of an agreed Strategic Framework for Afghanistan. The purpose of this framework is "to enhance the synergy between the United Nations political strategy in the country and the international assistance activities, and to promote greater effectiveness and coherence in the international assistance programme." This essentially comprises a political strategy for peace-building and a mechanism for achieving operational, policy and technical clarity with regards to humanitarian assistance. The principled Common Programming Approach envisaged the establishment of the Afghanistan Programming Body in September 1998, and the introduction of common programming by the end of that year. This approach was fully endorsed by WFP's Executive Board in October 1998.
14. WFP participated in the preparation and implementation of principled common programming. WFP fully subscribes to the set of principles established to guide the activities of United Nations and other external assistance actors in Afghanistan. In early 1999 the United Nations Coordinator's Office appointed Human Rights and Gender Advisers in Islamabad, with whom WFP works closely in preparing and implementing its programme. In addition, WFP is a participating member in the Afghanistan Programming Body comprising United Nations agencies, donors and NGOs who strive to ensure that principled common programming is adhered to by all. Finally, WFP has participated in the preparation of the various "Next Steps" papers which have shaped the gradual re-engagement of United Nations agencies in Afghanistan since March 1999. The February 1999 "Next Steps" paper has led to the evolution of assistance from being strictly "life-saving" to a situation where "windows of opportunity to pursue a rights-based agenda should be pursued when and where they exist."¹
15. United Nations agencies, donor representatives and NGOs participated in separate consultative meetings to discuss and contribute to the PRRO for 2000–2001.
16. For 2000–2001, WFP is proposing a renewed emphasis on rehabilitation which adheres to the principled United Nations Common Programming Approach to which WFP subscribes. The proposed approach reflects signs of modest improvement in the situation of women. While the Taliban policies with regards to women's access to education and employment continue to restrict the work of the United Nations in Afghanistan and life continues to be difficult for women in most parts of the country, there are indications, in the first half of 1999, that these policies are not as rigidly imposed as before. For example,

¹ "Next Steps in Afghanistan: March to June 1999" (United Nations Afghanistan Country Team); "Humanitarian Action in 1999: Where do we go from here?"; and "Principled Common Programming: Challenges and Opportunities" from the Afghan Support Group Meeting in Stockholm (21–22 June 1999).



in an edict issued in August 1998 by the Afghan Ministry of Justice, widows are allowed to work outside their homes so long as they dress modestly, while married women can work outside of their homes as long as they receive the permission of their husbands. In addition, home-based schools catering for significant numbers of girls operate in various parts of the country. Female doctors and nurses are generally allowed to work in government hospitals and training programmes for female nurses are being revived.

RECOVERY STRATEGY

Beneficiary Needs

17. In urban areas, the situation is particularly severe for households without a male wage-earner. Because of the limited employment opportunities, women in female-headed households must resort to begging and sending their children out to work once household assets have been sold off; an estimated 28,000 children work in Kabul.¹ In Kabul, most households without adult, active male labour earn around 50 percent of their families' minimum required income. Earnings from these activities neither permit access to a well-balanced diet nor the purchase of essential non-food items such as winter clothing and fuel. Over 10 percent of households fall under this category. Households in Kabul with one able-bodied man working as a casual labourer or government employee fare only slightly better than households headed by women and earn, on average, 85 percent of their minimum income requirement. The VAM team estimates that 35 percent of households in Kabul fall under this category. In Mazar-e-Sharif, households without male workers are reported to earn only 60 percent of the cost of minimum food needs. When begging is taken into account, these households earn over 100 percent of the cost of minimum food needs.²
18. The areas hardest hit by the economic decline are low cereal production regions traditionally dependent on trading for food, such as Badakshan in north-eastern Afghanistan and the Central Highlands where access to markets is frequently blocked by fighting. Both the Central Highlands and Badakshan were recipients of WFP emergency food distribution during 1999. Supply routes blocked by military activity mean that major urban centres such as Kabul and Bamyan are not able to have access to surplus cereal production from the north. These heavily populated areas depend on imported commercial wheat and food aid.
19. Returning refugees and internally displaced persons will continue to require initial assistance to facilitate their reintegration. VAM interviews with displaced families demonstrated that they have the same sources and quantities of income as resident households of the same composition who had always been in the area, and once established, live in the same way and are no more vulnerable. However, there is an initial vulnerable period of up to one year, during which an IDP household experiences a higher degree of insecurity.
20. The global rate of acute malnutrition for children under 5 in Kabul, the largest urban centre, is reported to have increased to 8.7 percent in February 1999, from 5.1 percent in

¹ Terre des Hommes, 1998.

² Kabul and Mazar figures from 1999 VAM results.



December 1996. Data from the same study suggest that the prevalence of stunting in children from 6 to 59 months in Kabul could be as high as 61 percent.¹

21. Wheat as flour or bread provides 60 to 85 percent of food energy to people in Kabul. The poorer the household, the more dominant wheat is in the diet. Households report the consumption of edible oil (5 to 15 percent of energy), and small amounts of vegetables and sugar. All but the poorest (without able-bodied men) ate some rice, and most groups ate small quantities of pulses on an irregular basis. Regular consumption of fruit, milk products and meat was very rare. WFP's VAM survey results indicate that the situation in the city of Mazar-e-Sharif is as tenuous as that of Kabul. The situation is slightly less bleak in Jalalabad, where the diet is markedly more varied than in Kabul. Households there regularly consume small quantities of meat, vegetables, pulses and potatoes.

Role of Food Aid

22. Food aid can ensure food availability to those who lack purchasing power or where there is an extreme shortage of food supplies. This reflects the situation in Afghanistan for the chronically poor in urban centres who cannot purchase sufficient food and for low production rural areas which have difficulty in acquiring food either because supply routes are cut or because of reduced crop production in surrounding areas. Once food is made available, food aid serves to stabilize the market and allows the most vulnerable to spend household income on non-food essentials such as winter clothing and fuel. In food-surplus areas, cash is preferred to food as an input for vulnerable households, and WFP has reduced its activities in those areas (such as Herat and parts of Kandahar).

Intervention Approaches

23. Under the proposed single-scenario approach, WFP will concentrate its resources on the most vulnerable groups (households without able-bodied men headed by women, children, the aged or disabled, IDPs, refugees, victims of natural or man-made disasters) in geographically targeted food-insecure areas. In addition, WFP Afghanistan is proposing a renewed emphasis on rehabilitation efforts. Repairing agricultural infrastructure such as damaged drainage and irrigation systems or improving the availability of quality seed to farmers should significantly increase food production.
24. WFP Afghanistan is an active participant in the United Nations Disaster Response Team. Given the administration's inability to respond to a disaster, such as the February 1999 earthquake, the international community must be able to react quickly to help people who need emergency shelter, food and other assistance. In order to ensure a high degree of emergency preparedness, in 1998 WFP developed a contingency plan encompassing OCHA, the United Nations agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and NGOs working inside Afghanistan. The overall goal of the plan is to highlight actions to be taken in the event of a man-made or natural disaster and pre-position food, medicine, equipment and other essentials. The contingency plan includes training of national and international staff in responding to emergency situations. In the event of an emergency situation in Afghanistan, WFP will remain the main provider of food aid and, with its fleet of trucks and well-established links with commercial transporters, it will be in a position to contribute significant logistics services.

¹ Taken from a nutritional survey by *Action contre la faim*, February 1999.



Risk Assessment

25. The continued presence in-country of WFP international staff and its operational partners depends largely on the security situation. Fighting in central Afghanistan between the Taliban and the Northern Alliance intensified between March and May 1999, and continued through the summer months. However, in other parts of the country the security situation is stable.
26. The lack of centralized Taliban administration and control systems results in the inconsistent application of approaches in different parts of the country and over time. Activities permitted in one region may be restricted in another. However, this provides opportunities for food-assisted activities in the less restricted areas which WFP is prepared to exploit.
27. The modest improvements noted above in conditions for women may not be sustained and are at risk of being reversed. The situation will be closely monitored by WFP and its United Nations and NGO partners and will be formally reviewed during the course of the gender equity mission planned in 2000.

Objectives and Goals

28. The general objective of the WFP Afghanistan programme is to provide immediate-impact food aid to the most vulnerable families in food-insecure areas and assist in stabilizing the food security situation.
29. WFP will provide much needed food aid through specific relief activities to families targeted as the most vulnerable in food-insecure geographical areas identified by the VAM exercise. These are families whose household economies do not permit the attainment of minimum food requirements. The goal of rehabilitation is to begin the process of improving the overall agricultural infrastructure (particularly drainage, irrigation systems and rural feeder roads), an essential first step in increasing domestic production and contributing towards the assurance of household food security. Initial steps in the rehabilitation of urban infrastructure (water supply, sanitation and drainage) will also continue to be undertaken.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Key Programme Components

30. Relief efforts will be implemented through the activities to specific categories of beneficiaries, as outlined in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1: BENEFICIARY TARGET GROUPS AND STRATEGY

Beneficiary type	Activity
Widows, orphans, unemployed, sick, elderly, disabled and those with no income (in Kabul, Jalalabad and Mazar)	Bakery
Victims of natural and human disasters (men, women and children)	Emergency feeding
Expectant and nursing mothers, malnourished children, in-and out-patients (tuberculosis, leprosy)	Institutional feeding



Families repatriated from Iran and Pakistan (men, women and children)	Repatriation
Internally displaced (men, women and children)	IDP assistance
School-aged girls and boys	Food for education
Women of working age, including widows	Food for training
Men and women of working age including the urban poor, unemployed, IDPs	Food for work
Farmers	Food for seed

31. Numbers of beneficiaries disaggregated by gender are illustrated in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2: DIRECT BENEFICIARIES BY GENDER

Activity	Year 2000			Year 2001		
	Females	Males	Total	Females	Males	Total
Bakery	246 240	185 760	432 000	212 040	159 960	372 000
Emergency feeding	347 000	320 000	667 000	115 000	107 000	222 000
Institutional feeding	36 300	29 700	66 000	36 300	29 700	66 000
Repatriation	114 400	105 600	220 000	93 600	86 400	180 000
IDP assistance	19 800	13 200	33 000	19 800	13 200	33 000
Food for education	30 000	20 000	50 000	60 000	40 000	100 000
Food for training	200		200	500		500
Subtotal	793 940	674 260	1 468 200	537 240	436 260	973 500
Food for work	2 680	50 920	53 600	3 570	67 830	71 400
Food for seed		4 560	4 560		3 040	3 040
Total	796 620	729 740	1 526 360	540 810	507 130	1 047 940

32. WFP expects to reach 796,620 female beneficiaries in 2000 and 540,810 in 2001. Women will represent 54 percent of direct beneficiary numbers in 2000 (excluding food for work and food for seed) where there is a high emergency distribution element, increasing to 55 percent in 2001. All possible efforts by WFP staff will be devoted to increasing the proportion of women beneficiaries during the course of the two years. With the recent employment of professional women staff (both international and national), increased Afghan women's participation will be promoted.

Beneficiaries, Needs and the Food Basket

33. The beneficiary selection process is undertaken by WFP in conjunction with other United Nations agencies and NGO partners. Beneficiaries are targeted by the following specific methods:

- a) household food surveys by the VAM Unit and implementing partners will identify beneficiaries for targeted feeding;
- b) identification of food-insecure areas and the poorest within these communities will serve to select beneficiaries for food for work;



- c) returnees will be identified by UNHCR under their repatriation programme; and
 d) families affected by natural and human disasters can be quickly identified by VAM.

34. The WFP standard food basket by strategy is described in Table 3 below.

TABLE 3: STANDARD RATION		
Strategy	Commodity	Ration scale
Bakery	Wheat	355 g/person/day
Emergency feeding	Wheat High-energy biscuits	500 g/person/day one-time distribution
Institutional feeding	Wheat flour Edible oil Pulses Sugar CSB	250 g/person/day 30 g/person/day 30 g/person/day 20 g/person/day 150 g/person/day 750 g family/day (leprosy and tuberculosis cases)
Repatriation assistance	Wheat	50 kg/person/one-time
IDP assistance	Wheat	500 g/person/day
Food for education	Wheat flour CSB Sugar	150 g/person/day 100 g/person/day 20 g/person/day
Food for training	Wheat	3.5 kg/person/day
Food for work	Wheat	7 kg/person/day
Food for seed	Wheat	1.25 kg/wheat for 1 kg improved seed

Selection of Activities

35. The food requirements for the PRRO 2000–2001 are detailed in the table below.

TABLE 4: FOOD REQUIREMENTS BY YEAR (IN TONS)				
Activity	1998—Actual delivery	1999—Planned	2000—Plan	2001—Plan
Bakery	46 160	46 500	43 250	30 000
Emergency	13 034	15 300	30 100	10 000
Institutional	2 998	4 000	4 750	4 750
Repatriation	3 173	12 800	11 000	9 000
IDPs	2 720	3 000	3 000	3 000
Food for education	nil	nil	2 500	5 000
Food for training	2 546	400	200	300
Food for work	16 942	9 800	15 000	20 000
Food for seed	4 307	5 000	6 000	4 000



Total	91 880	96 800	115 800	86 050
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36. The total amount of food required for the two-year period is **201,850 tons**.

Relief Activities

37. There are currently three bakery projects, two year-round bakeries in Kabul and a seasonal bakery in Jalalabad to cover the winter months. In these projects bread is sold to vulnerable people at a highly subsidized rate, equivalent to about 10 percent of the prevailing commercial price. Revenue generated from the bakeries is used to cover operational costs including WFP's implementing partners' expenses. The proceeds are converted to US dollars through a currency exchange mechanism. The funds accrued to date and any future surpluses will be re-invested in Afghanistan according to an agreed expenditure plan and subject to the approval of the WFP Project Approval Committee in Islamabad.
38. In Kabul WFP is currently providing wheat flour enabling 270,000 poor people to buy highly subsidized bread. ICRC and Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere (CARE) have related free food (half ration) distribution programmes targeting about 120,000 and 60,000 people, respectively. According to VAM estimates, around 160,000 people in Kabul are extremely food-insecure and a further 420,000 are marginally food-insecure. WFP's strategy will be to reduce the number of bakery beneficiaries to 220,000 in 2000 and 180,000 in 2001, and to work more closely with ICRC and CARE to ensure that the extremely food-insecure are targeted, together with the most vulnerable of the marginally food-insecure category. Year-round assistance will continue in Kabul in 2000, but if conditions permit, a three-month summer break may be introduced in 2001 to facilitate the targeting process.
39. In Jalalabad, where food insecurity is somewhat less pervasive than in Kabul, WFP's strategy is to reduce its bakery assistance from 150,000 beneficiaries over seven winter months in 1998/99 to 100,000 beneficiaries over six winter months in 1999/2000 and 80,000 beneficiaries over five months in the following winter. According to VAM estimates, there are around 40,000 to 80,000 people in moderately food-insecure households, without a male worker, and a further 140,000 to 175,000 people moderately vulnerable to food insecurity, with a male worker, in Jalalabad. Taking advantage of the summer breaks in the bakery programme, WFP, its NGO partners and, to the extent possible, the Government of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, will work to ensure that the most food-insecure people are targeted by this programme.
40. In Mazar-e-Sharif, results of WFP's VAM survey suggest that food insecurity is as problematic as in Kabul. It is estimated that between 130,000 and 280,000 people are food-insecure, including 10,000 to 40,000 people living in very poor households without male workers. Due to repeated outbreaks of fighting and the looting of its office, WFP has made no food distribution in Mazar-e-Sharif since August 1997. Subject to the current relatively more stable situation continuing, WFP plans to start a bakery programme in Mazar-e-Sharif targeting 112,000 people in the winter of 1999/2000, which may be further expanded in the following winter.
41. Under the emergency activity, food distribution is expected to take place in areas seriously affected by the dry winter/spring of 1999, in the lean winter months; food assistance will also be provided following the occurrence of natural disasters (earthquakes and floods). Provision has been made to distribute 30,100 tons of wheat in 2000, reducing



to 10,000 tons in 2001 when it is assumed that normal climatic conditions will prevail. In addition, provision has been made for 50 tons of high-energy biscuits to be provided each year, for immediate assistance in post-disaster situations. Where feasible, food-for-work activities will be implemented in regions vulnerable to natural emergencies in order to increase the assets available to families affected by these events and decrease their need for emergency aid. However, WFP will retain the flexibility to provide such emergency assistance as may be required in Afghanistan in 2000–2001.

42. The allotment of food for institutional feeding will be maintained at 4,750 tons for both years. In hospitals, WFP food serves to promote the recovery process. In orphanages WFP food represents a budgetary support. In both cases, WFP food items are combined with additional foods that implementing partners (Ministry of Public Health and NGO partners) are supposed to provide. Victims of diseases such as leprosy and tuberculosis, as well as malnourished children and those in orphanages will continue to be assisted. Beneficiaries also include expectant and nursing mothers. Leprosy and tuberculosis patients are provided 150 g of CSB per day and an additional 500 g of CSB is provided as a take-home ration for the patient's family members. The provision of WFP food as an incentive to continue with tuberculosis medication programmes over several months has been particularly useful in Afghanistan, with WHO recording a treatment completion rate of 79 percent.

Returnees and IDPs

43. In the event that necessary conditions are met, WFP and UNHCR are planning for the return of 220,000 refugees from Iran and Pakistan in 2000 and 180,000 in 2001. Returning families will receive 50 kg of wheat per person with a 300 kg limit per family. Where possible, the wheat is provided in two payments: one immediately following arrival in Afghanistan and one two months later. Each returning family must include one adult female member; this serves to distinguish families from economic migrants, typically single adult males.
44. Some 3,000 tons of food per annum has been programmed for internally displaced people, in line with the recent experience of needs. The number of these beneficiaries is difficult to predict as they may arise unexpectedly as a result of fighting or natural disasters. The most recent estimates put the figure at 2.5 million displaced people finding temporary shelter in major urban centres. There is flexibility between the different activities in case additional quantities of food are required here.

Education and Skills Training

45. Food for training, as it has been practised in past years, is to be excluded in 2000–2001, since it has produced few concrete marketable skills for participants, especially women producing embroidery and other handicrafts. Vocational trades training, while producing marketable skills, is generally an activity which is restricted to men. WFP remains committed to activities which promote the advancement of women and will set aside a small contingency for training projects that directly impart basic business skills within the widows' bakery projects, for instance.
46. Food for education is a new activity which aims to alleviate children's short-term hunger and subsequently improve their concentration and learning capacities by providing an early morning meal upon arrival at school. This activity will target food-deficit areas where both boys and girls go to school. In addition, WFP aims at reaching a target of 60 percent girls participation out of the total number of beneficiaries in this new activity. This target will be closely monitored. The provision of educational inputs to the schools concerned, by



UNICEF through the main educational NGOs, will be a pre-requisite for WFP support. A feasibility study is to be conducted jointly with UNICEF to determine the modalities of this activity and identify target areas. The number of beneficiaries and quantity of food allocated are planned to increase progressively in 2000 and 2001.

Towards Recovery

47. Food for work is perceived by WFP, other partner United Nations agencies, NGOs, the communities and the authorities to be one of WFP's most effective ways of constructively engaging with communities in Afghanistan. Under the circumstances prevailing in both Taliban-controlled areas of Afghanistan, and to a considerable extent in other areas of the country, opportunities for women to work on food-for-work projects are extremely limited. It is not possible for WFP to design food-for-work activities which include 25 percent women as direct participants. Therefore, the continuing implementation of food-for-work activities will be tied to achieving the target set out in the food-for-education activities—that is 60 percent girls. The emphasis in 2000 and 2001 will be to ensure that the food for work is directed to beneficial community activities where the assets created produce outputs at least equally shared between women and men. Examples of such outputs include the additional wheat that can be grown after the rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure, and improved village water supply schemes which will reduce the time and effort women devote to collecting water. To the greatest extent possible WFP will seek to construct assets such as mother and child health clinics, girls' schools and maternity wards which largely or exclusively benefit females. WFP will renew its efforts with the authorities to pursue the desired goals of universal girls' education and greater access of women to employment outside the home, and will continue to concentrate its food-for-work inputs on areas which are most progressive in that respect. It is planned to conduct a gender equity appraisal during the first year of the PRRO, one objective of which will be to gauge progress in this direction.
48. During the course of 2000 and 2001 WFP will pay particular attention to increasing the number of direct female beneficiaries engaged in food for work. At present there are a limited number of women workers in tree nurseries. Food for work will be used to support the training of female traditional birth attendants. With the greater number of women staff at its disposal in Afghanistan, WFP will give increased attention over the two years of the PRRO to raising the extent to which women are both direct and ultimate beneficiaries of its food-for-work resources.
49. Long-term improvement in the status of vulnerable Afghan households is dependent on rehabilitating agricultural infrastructure, such as irrigation systems. The resultant increased food production would be of direct benefit to the 75 percent of Afghan women and men working in rural areas. The positive impact of increased food production would extend to the urban marketplace by reducing the current high cost of locally produced cereals, fruits and vegetables. This decrease would affect vulnerable families, typically female-headed, currently unable to earn enough income to meet their minimum food needs. A further benefit of food-for-work activities is the 7 kg of wheat which the male wage earner is paid daily and which contributes to meeting the family's basic food needs. Anecdotal information indicates that the intra-household distribution of food does not discriminate against women and children in Afghanistan.
50. Reflecting the key role of food for work, wheat allocations are proposed to be increased to 15,000 tons in 2000 and 20,000 tons in 2001. This compares with only about 7,200 tons in 1999 and with the historic high of nearly 56,000 tons in 1996. WFP is mindful that the



scale of food for work must be restricted to the level of management oversight capacity which exists in respect of its implementing partners, and to WFP's own monitoring capacity.

51. Under food for seed, through NGOs recruited by FAO, Afghan farmers multiply improved seed which is then traded for WFP wheat, as wheat is preferred to cash by these farmers. The improved seed is then distributed to other farmers. This activity will be expanded in 2000 and then decreased in 2001 in conjunction with FAO's intention to commercialize the seed trade. The number of beneficiaries will decrease by one third.

Activity Approval Mechanisms

52. Project proposals are received and reviewed by the individual sub-offices. This initial review by the head of the sub-office determines whether or not the project is transmitted to the country office. The proposed activities should conform to WFP policy guidelines which include particular references to gender, project feasibility, role of food aid, participation of the community, composition of beneficiaries and benefits, sustainability, availability of non-food items, duration of activity and role of the implementing partner. Site assessment is crucial to the initial review process. If this initial stage is positive, the head of sub-office submits the proposal to the Country Director. The project is then reviewed by the Project Approval Committee under the leadership of the Country Director and comprised of WFP programme, logistics and finance staff. A final decision is taken by this committee.

WFP Institutional Arrangements

53. WFP Afghanistan is implementing a policy to upgrade substantially the level, number and quality of its field staff, especially women. The purpose of this initiative is twofold. Firstly, higher-grade staff operating with well-defined guidance materials are expected to deliver higher standard food-assisted projects with a greater degree of accountability than was achieved in the past. Secondly, professional women, both international and national, have recently been recruited in order to maximize the benefits of WFP's assistance to Afghan women. The sub-offices of Mazar-e-Sharif and Faizabad are headed by international professional women at P-4 level. The posts of Deputy Head of the Kabul sub-office, Programme Adviser, Reports and Monitoring Officer, Finance and Administration Officer, and Human Resources Officer in WFP Afghanistan are all occupied by international professional women. Major efforts are also being made to recruit new Afghan female staff to work in the sub-offices in Afghanistan. Currently there are five female food monitors in Kabul and two in Herat. The authorities are being encouraged to have women work as openly and effectively as possible to help ensure that more of the benefits of WFP food accrue to women.
54. Training of international and national staff is a priority for WFP Afghanistan. An emergency food needs assessment training course for trainers was held in May 1999 in Islamabad. Participants came from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tajikistan and WFP headquarters. Field training for these trainers was organized in August–September 1999. A targeting workshop was held in September 1999 for programme staff.
55. Workshops for all WFP staff have been organized in finance and administration and logistics. In the second half of 1999, WFP will embark on a series of capacity-building activities to upgrade gender mainstreaming and programming skills, especially among Afghan WFP staff. These workshops will be planned and executed in collaboration with the United Nations Gender Adviser. Gender-responsive programming will be featured in all programme-related workshops for WFP staff and implementing partners.



56. Workshops to acquaint potential implementing partners with WFP guidelines for the preparation, implementation and monitoring of projects took place in December 1998 and May 1999 in Peshawar and Quetta, Pakistan, respectively.

Implementing Partners

57. OCHA has the role of coordinating humanitarian assistance within the United Nations system as well as with the local and international NGOs in Afghanistan. Regional coordination bodies and regional coordination officers (RCOs) have been established in the field to promote common programming. In addition, emergency assistance in the past has been coordinated through the RCOs. Under this regional umbrella, WFP-assisted projects are currently being implemented in Afghanistan in collaboration with United Nations agencies, international and national NGOs, and local government. Within the United Nations family, WFP collaborates extensively with UNHCR (assistance to repatriated families through repatriation grants); with HABITAT (rehabilitation of urban infrastructure and the shelter programme for refugees); with FAO (through the food-for-seed scheme); and with WHO (rehabilitation of water-supply systems).
58. International NGOs such as *Agence d'aide à la coopération technique et au développement* (ACTED) in Kabul, and Mercy Corps International (MCI) in Jalalabad are WFP implementing partners for the bakeries. Pamir Reconstruction Bureau (PRB) and Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief (ACBAR) are responsible for monitoring the bakery activities in Kabul and Jalalabad, respectively. WFP also has implementing partners for food for work activities such as *Mission d'aide au développement des économies rurales en Afghanistan* and German Agro-Action and works with NGOs such as OXFAM on emergency activities. These organizations complement WFP food with management inputs and a cash component to purchase materials required for the activities. In addition, all VAM field workers have been trained by WFP and now work for the NGO ACBAR. Wherever possible, traditional community structures are used to help target the most vulnerable.
59. Local government and government departments collaborate on the bakery projects (Ministry of Planning and the Department of Social Affairs); in institutional feeding (Ministry of Public Health); and in some regions in limited rehabilitation activities (Department of Rehabilitation and Rural Development). Representatives of these ministries and departments participate in local committees for the selection of and access to beneficiary groups.

Logistics

60. WFP delivers food aid to land-locked Afghanistan through both the southern and northern corridors. Use of dual corridors helps to circumvent access difficulties provoked by frequent border closures or internal security threats. Over 80 percent of WFP food aid arrives through the southern route. Container cargo arrives through Karachi Port and bulk cargo through Port Qasim. Commodities are then shipped overland by road to WFP transshipment bases in Pakistan at Quetta, 700 km, and Peshawar, 1,400 km, for storage, milling, and re-forwarding to eastern and southern provinces in Afghanistan (Jalalabad, Kabul, Kandahar). Through the northern corridor cargo arrives from ports in the Baltic Sea (Riga, Tallin and Ventspils), and occasionally from the Black Sea. Commodities are then transported by rail over 4,500 km to WFP transshipment bases at Termez in Uzbekistan, Osh in Kyrgyzstan and Kushka in Turkmenistan for storage and re-forwarding to all northern and western provinces in Afghanistan (Mazar, Bamyán, Herat and Badakshan).



61. The Regional Logistics Unit, in close liaison with WFP's Logistics Service, is in charge of the overland transport and the management of the WFP transshipment bases in the region. The Afghanistan Logistics Unit is responsible for re-forwarding to Afghanistan from the transshipment bases as well as all the internal storage and secondary transport, using mostly locally-hired private carriers, together with a large United Nations-WFP truck fleet operating out of Peshawar. In view of the volatile security situation in Afghanistan, WFP aims to maintain minimal operational stocks inside Afghanistan, two to four weeks' requirements, while buffer stocks are pre-positioned at the various transshipment bases in the region.
62. The unstable security situation and the difficult access to many areas, due to the poor infrastructure network, often result in the need for complex transshipments in-country and even the use, in some cases, of animal transport. For example, remote and inaccessible areas in Badakshan and Bamyan were included in WFP assistance during 1999. Transportation of food commodities to Badakshan involves a combination of truck and donkey transport and takes several days. Food commodities dispatched from the north to Bamyan have to pass through extremely difficult road conditions and at several points transshipment to smaller lorries may be required. The particular climatic conditions can also result in restricted access to some regions during winter, such as the Central Highlands, due to heavy snowfalls and frequent landslides.

Monitoring and Evaluation

63. Monitoring field activities is the responsibility of the sub-offices. Within each office monitoring tasks are assigned to programme staff who ensure that a monitoring calendar is established and that activities are monitored on a regular basis. The number of staff required to undertake monitoring tasks varies by sub-office. At the beginning of 1999, seven of the monitors were national female staff: five based in Kabul and two in Herat. The female staff are actively engaged in carrying out their monitoring duties. Over the course of 1999, there will be further recruitment of national professional programme monitors.
64. Monitoring revolves mainly around food distribution and project activities. Where possible, a monitoring officer is present for each food distribution. This type of monitoring assists in ensuring that the food is delivered to the beneficiaries on schedule and in the required quantity. Projects are visited at least once each month during the implementation phase. Further, each project is visited prior to the first distribution of food. The bakery projects are visited on a daily basis in order to verify the production of bread and to collect proceeds. Given the workload that this type of endeavour entails, several NGOs have been contracted to monitor the bakery activities. Implementation is the responsibility of ACTED in Kabul and MCI in Jalalabad. In addition, ACBAR in Jalalabad and PRB in Kabul are responsible for the day-to-day monitoring.
65. General guidelines and a series of worksheets have been developed to facilitate monitoring activities. There are forms for rehabilitation strategies (food for work, and food for training), relief assistance (institutional feeding) and a separate one for the bakery projects. Specific guidelines have been prepared for monitoring IDP Camp Feedings. Once the worksheets have been completed, key issues are taken up with the sub-office heads and appropriate action is instituted. The country office receives monthly monitoring reports.
66. Monitoring indicators to be tracked are as follows:
- a) **Bakery projects.** Quality and weight of bread baked; number of loaves produced; storage conditions of wheat flour; number of direct food recipients by location and



gender; number of workers at the bakery as compared to requirements; collection of sales proceeds; record-keeping by implementing partners; community participation in the identification of beneficiaries.

- b) **Institutional feeding projects.** Number of direct food recipients (males and females); food storage conditions, stock balance and utilization records; average daily distribution of cooked meals and quantity served to in-patients; organization of feeding, availability of water, and hygiene conditions; nutritional status of beneficiaries.
- c) **IDP camp feeding.** Number of camp residents; services at the camps and security arrangements; coordination among United Nations agencies and NGOs working at the camp; role of local government and services provided; appropriateness of rations.
- d) **Food for work and Food for seed.** Number of beneficiaries (males and females); actual physical outputs; quality of outputs; stock position; project management.
- e) **Food for education.** Number of schools; number of boys and girls enrolled and attending classes; amount of food distributed.
- f) **Food security monitoring.** VAM is setting up a food security monitoring system which will require the participation of the WFP sub-offices and implementing partners. The system will be activated in urban areas and food-insecure rural areas.

Security Measures

- 67. Between March and June 1999 WFP international staff were able to visit the urban centres of Kabul, Jalalabad, Mazar, Herat, Kandahar and Faizabad. However, travel outside of the major urban centres was not permitted. These restrictions reflected the unpredictable conditions away from the urban centres in the wake of the August 1998 events which precipitated sporadic episodes of mob violence. In much of central and northern Afghanistan the situation is tense, as fighting has been renewed since March. Fighting between the Taliban and the Northern Alliance is particularly intense in and around the city of Bamyan. The Northern Alliance remains in control of Badakshan in the north.
- 68. Security issues are coordinated by OCHA under the auspices of the office of the United Nations Security Coordinator (UNSECOORD). United Nations Field Security Officers (FSOs) are to be assigned to the major urban centres to advise on field security matters. In June 1999 three were in place; one based in Kabul and another based in Herat, while a third rotated between the remaining regions. There are plans to recruit three additional FSOs by November 1999 to provide full-time coverage in other urban centres. WFP international staff members may take up residence where an FSO is on hand, and subject to the overall availability of security slots for each location. Weekly Security Management Team meetings are held in Islamabad to ensure the transmittal of current and accurate security information and to plan the strategy for the re-engagement of international staff in Afghanistan.
- 69. WFP has installed radio and e-mail communication equipment in all sub-offices. Further, satellite telephones are currently being installed in the sub-offices to ensure regular communication with the country office. WFP contributes to the common United Nations security budget through UNSECOORD in New York.



EXIT STRATEGY

70. A definitive exit strategy is premature at this time given the prevailing situation in Afghanistan. Peaceful conditions do not exist; there is little on going rehabilitation of the economy; there is insufficient local capacity to provide for the most vulnerable. These conditions are not expected to change significantly by December 2001.
71. The increased emphasis on rehabilitation activities is, however, expected to improve the overall situation for vulnerable families. In addition, it is expected that as agricultural infrastructure improves and there is a corresponding and gradual increase in food production, the local purchase of food commodities by WFP may be feasible. In any case, the long-term requirement for WFP to be able to withdraw from Afghanistan is the achievement of universal and enduring peace in the country.

Contingency Mechanism

72. The PRRO has a built-in contingency mechanism in case of unforeseen events. The country office will be able to transfer food allocations between activities.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

73. The PRRO is recommended for approval by the Executive Board within the budget provided in Annexes I and II.



ANNEX I

PROJECT COST BREAKDOWN			
	Quantity (tons)	Average cost per ton	Value (dollars)
WFP COSTS			
A. Direct operational costs			
Commodities ¹			
– Wheat	193 078	128	24 713 984
– Vegetable oil	404	840	339 360
– Pulses	404	250	101 000
– Sugar	748	250	187 000
– High energy biscuits	100	1 500	150 000
– CSB	7 116	234	1 665 144
Total commodities	201 850		27 156 488
External transport			
- superintendence costs		62.67	12 649 940
Landside Transport		57	11 505 450
ITSH		66	13 322 100
Total LTSH		123	24 827 550
Subtotal direct operational costs			64 633 978
B. Direct support costs (see Annex II for details)			
Subtotal direct support costs			17 649 583
Total direct costs			82 283 561
C. Indirect support costs (7.1 percent of total direct costs)			
Subtotal indirect support costs			5 842 133
TOTAL WFP COSTS			88 125 694
TOTAL PROJECT COST (WFP)			88 125 694

¹ This is a notional food basket used for budgeting and approval purposes. The precise mix and actual quantities of commodities to be supplied to the project, as in all WFP-assisted projects, may vary over time depending on the availability of commodities to WFP and domestically within the recipient country.



ANNEX II**DIRECT SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS (*dollars*)****Staff costs**

International	6 344 000
United Nations Volunteers	390 000
National professional officers	190 000
International consultants and SSA	86 040
Local staff and temporaries	3 856 090
Overtime	101 500
Subtotal	10 967 630

Technical support services

Project monitoring and evaluation	250 300
Training	50 000
Subtotal	300 300

Travel and DSA

In-country	425 289
Blanket travel	206 654
Subtotal	631 943

Office expenses

Rental of facility	241 021
Utilities	101 500
Communications	121 800
Office supplies	106 635
Equipment repair and maintenance	89 908
Subtotal	660 864

Vehicle operations

Fuel and maintenance	376 362
Subtotal	376 362

Equipment

Communications equipment	268 975
Vehicles	500 000
Computer equipment	180 000
Furniture and equipment	71 050
Subtotal	1 020 025

Other

VAM	143 000
Gender	228 588
Aircraft operations	550 000
Security (OCHA cost sharing)	507 500



DIRECT SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS (*dollars*)

Hazard pay	167 272
Transport fleets	920 000
Milling costs	1 092 000
Hospitality	3 600
News and periodicals	5 227
Miscellaneous	75 272
Subtotal	3 692 459
TOTAL DIRECT SUPPORT COSTS	17 649 583

